DRAFT

Complete Streets – City of West Des Moines, Iowa
Complete Streets Policy

A "complete street" is a street that is designed and built so that it accommodates travel by all modes, be it by motor vehicle, foot, bicycle, or other means. A complete street may include different elements on one street compared to another street with different conditions, but both are designed to balance safety and convenience for everyone using the road. Complete streets are essential for access by people who cannot drive, including children, elderly, and people with disabilities, as roads without safe access for non-motorized transportation represent a barrier for these individuals.

The City of West Des Moines recognizes the need for complete streets and will strive to accommodate elements that create a complete street, where possible, so that all users can travel safely and independently. Some of the elements under consideration for inclusion on a complete street can be sidewalks, side paths, shared lane markings ("sharrows"), bike lanes, paved shoulders, pedestrian crossings (including at-grade crosswalks and pedestrian overpasses/underpasses), pedestrian signals, signs, street furniture, and transit stops and facilities.

To this end, the City of West Des Moines will consider all modes and types of users in new construction and reconstruction of road and bridge projects through the following:

- Constructing sidewalks and trails (using the trails master plan as a guide) for new developments as per City Code *9-3-11: Sidewalks Required*.
- Working with the West Des Moines Bicycle Advisory Commission to develop and implement a bicycle master plan for on-street and off-street bicycle facilities and keeping the master plan current as the City develops over time.
- Working with the Des Moines Area Regional Transit Authority (DART) to accommodate transit facilities along planned bus routes.

Some conditions may prohibit the construction of bicycle and pedestrian facilities or make some types of designated facilities impractical. For example, this includes situations where:

- Bicyclists and pedestrians are prohibited by law from using the roadway (e.g., interstates).
- The cost of establishing bikeways and walkways would be excessively disproportionate to the need or probable use or exceed budget costs (e.g., resurfacing).
- Sparsity of population or other factors indicate an absence of future need. This is defined as streets developed as a cul-de-sac with four or fewer dwellings. Also an indication of absence of need is when the average daily traffic (ADT) is projected to be less than 500 vehicles per day over the life of this project.
- The street has severe topographic or natural resource restraints.
- Vehicle speed, traffic volumes, sight distance, or other conditions would create potential safety hazards.

Streets are often constructed in multiple stages. Roadways that are ultimately planned to be four-lane streets may initially be constructed as two-lane streets, for example. Complete street elements may also be added in stages, such as where sidewalks or trails are planned to be constructed as

part of future development of the adjacent properties. This highlights the importance to plan in advance for the future complete street configuration, where possible, to acquire sufficient right-of-way and locate utilities in a manner that will accommodate the locations of future sidewalks, trails, on-street bicycle facilities, transit stops, crossings, etc.

The design and development of the transportation infrastructure should provide for all users through the subsequent steps:

- Plan projects for the long-term. Transportation improvements are long-term investments that remain in place for many years. The design and construction of new facilities should anticipate likely future demand for transit, bicycling, and walking facilities and not preclude the provision of future improvements.
- Address the need for bicyclists and pedestrians to cross corridors as well as travel along them. Therefore the design of intersections and interchanges should attempt to accommodate all crossings in a manner that is safe, accessible, and convenient.
- Design facilities to the best currently available standards and guidelines. The design of facilities for bicyclists and pedestrians should follow design guidelines and standards that are commonly used, such as:
    - AASHTO *Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities,*
    - AASHTO's *A Policy on Geometric Design of Highways and Streets,*
    - AASHTO's *Guide for the Planning, Design, and Operation of Pedestrian Facilities,*
    - SUDAS: *State Urban Design and Specifications Manual*
    - Federal Highway Administration's *Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices for Streets and Highways,*
    - ITE Recommended Practice *Context Sensitive Solutions in Designing Major Urban Thoroughfares for Walkable Communities.*